APPLICATION

FOR

UNITED STATES LETTERS PATENT

TITLE: DECODER CIRCUIT IN A FLASH MEMORY DEVICE

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"EXPRESS MAIL" Mailing Label Number EM153707102US
Date of Deposit DECEMBER 24, 1997
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DECODER CIRCUIT IN A FLASH MEMORY DEVICE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a row decoder circuit in a flash memory device which can increase the number of a local row decoder, to which an output of a global row decoder is input, as many number of sectors when the sectors are ~~divide~~ divided in a column direction. TP

Description of the Prior Art

Generally, a flash memory device has both functions of electrical program and erasure. In the flash memory device capable of programming sector-by-sector, it is a general requirement that the write cycle of more than a hundred thousand has to be guaranteed. At this time, the number of stress acted to the gate of unit cell is same as the number of the unit cell connected to a single word line, and the number of stress acted to the drain of unit cell is same as the number of the unit cell connected to a single bit line.

FIG. 1 is a circuit diagram of a conventional row decoder.

In a read mode, a first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** of a selected sector is switched to a Vdd voltage level and a second voltage supply signals **SnVeex** and **XRST** thereof are switched to a ground voltage level. At this time, as a

PMOS transistor **hp1** is turned on, a node **A** has a Vdd voltage level and the Vdd voltage level of the node **A** turns on a NMOS transistor **thn**, thus a sector word line signal **SnWL** maintains a ground voltage level.

On the other hand, one **XnCOM** selected by a NAND gate I to which row address signals **XBPRED** and **XCPRED** and a sector signal S are input maintains a ground voltage level. At this time, since only a single **XAPRED** maintains a Vdd voltage level, a NMOS transistor **hn** of the row decoder which will be selected is turned on, the node **A** of the selected row decoder maintains a ground voltage level. Therefore, the ground voltage level applied to the node **A** causes a PMOS transistor **hp3** to turn on, thus a sector word line signal **SnWL** maintains a Vpp voltage level.

In a program mode, the first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** of the selected sector is switched to a Vpp voltage level, the second voltage supply signal **SnVeex** thereof is switched to a ground voltage level. The **XRST** thereof maintains a ~~gerund~~ ground voltage level before the first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** is switched to Vpp voltage and is switched to Vpp voltage level when the first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** is switched to Vpp voltage. A first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** of a non-selected sector maintains a Vdd voltage level and the **XRST** of the non-selected sector maintains a ground voltage level so that a word line **SnWL** of the not-selected sector is switched to a ground voltage level.

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On the other hand, one **XnCOM** selected by a NAND gate I to which row address signals **XBPRED** and **XCPRED** and the sector signal S are input maintains a ground voltage level. At this time, since only a single **XAPRED** maintains a Vdd voltage level, a NMOS transistor **hn** of the row decoder which will be selected is turned on, the node **A** of the selected row decoder maintains a ground voltage level. Therefore, the ground voltage level applied to the node **A** causes a PMOS transistor **hp3** to turn on, thus a sector word line signal **SnWL** maintains a Vpp voltage level.

In an erase mode, the first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** of the selected sector is switched to a ground voltage level, the second voltage supply signal **SnVeex** thereof is switched to a -Vpp voltage level, and **XRST** thereof is switched to a ground voltage level. And, a first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** of a non-selected sector is switched to a Vdd voltage level, a second voltage supply signal **SnVeex** thereof is switched to a ground voltage level, and the **XRST** thereof is switched to a ground voltage level.

As a result, as the node **A** of the non-selected sector is at Vdd voltage level, the sector word line thereof maintains a ground voltage level. Meanwhile, as the **NMOS** transistor **thn** in the row decoder of the selected sector is turned on, all the word line signals **SnWL** maintain a -Vpp voltage level.

In the row decoder as described above, the number of the row decoder is increased as many when the sector is divided in a column direction, the number

of **XnCOM** of the row decoder is increased. Therefore, a free decoder output load and an address buffer output load are increased proportionally. As a result, an access time is delayed and the size of a chip becomes large.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is, therefore, an object of the present invention to provide a row decoder circuit which can minimize a load due to a row address signal and decrease an access time and a size of chip due to the local row decoder having a simply circuit.

A decoder circuit according to the present invention comprises a global row decoder consisted of a first decoding means selected according to a row address signal and a second decoding means to which an output signal of the first decoding means and an erasure signal are input and a local row decoder for selecting each global word line signal outputted from the global row decoder.

The local row decoder is consisted of a first and second transistors to the word line signal is input, and a third, fourth and fifth transistors outputting a first voltage supply signal and a second voltage supply signal to a sector word line.

Another decoder circuit of the present invention comprises a global row decoder for outputting a global word line signal and a local row decoder for selecting a word line in response to the global word line signal of the global

row decoder. The global row decoder is consisted of a first and second transistors to which XnCOM signal is input and a third and fourth transistors, to which an output voltage of the first ~~frist~~ and second transistors, for outputting a Vppx or Veex to a global sector word line.

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Brief description of the drawings

Other objects and advantages of the present invention will be understood by reading the detailed explanation of the embodiment with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

FIG. 1 is a circuit diagram illustrating a conventional row decoder.

FIG. 2 is a circuit diagram illustrating a global row decoder according to the first embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 3 is a circuit diagram illustrating a local row decoder according to the first embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 4 is a circuit diagram illustrating a global row decoder according to the second embodiment of the present invention.

FIG. 5 is a circuit diagram illustrating a local row decoder according to a the second embodiment of the present invention.

Detailed description of the drawings

Below, the preferred embodiments of the present invention will be in

detail explained by reference to the accompanying drawings.

FIG. 2 is a circuit diagram illustrating a global row decoder according to the first embodiment of the present invention.

An output signal of a first decoding means **I11** is determined by row address signals **XAPRED**, **XBPRED** and **XCPRED**. The output signal of the first decoding means **I11** and an erasure signal **E** are input to a second decoding means **I12**, thereby outputting a global word line signal **GWL**. The first and second decoding means **I11** and **I12** are consisted of NAND gates. That is, in a read node and a program mode, only one of a plurality of global word line signals **GWL** is selected as a Vdd voltage level. In erasure mode, since the erasure signal **E** maintains a ground voltage level, the global word line signal **GWL** in all the global row decoder maintains a Vdd voltage level.

FIG. 3 is a circuit diagram of a local row decoder. The global word line signal **GWL** is input to the local low decoder, the global word line signal **GWL** transfers to a sector word line of the column sector selected by means of the combination of the column sector address **SnCOM**. Also, a sector word line signal **SnWL** of a non-selected column sectors maintains a ground voltage level.

The operations of the local row decoder will be explained mode-by-mode as follows.

In a read mode, a first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** of all the column sectors is switched to a Vdd voltage level and a second voltage supply signal

SnVeex thereof is switched to a ground voltage level. The selected column sector address signal **SnCOM** of the column sector is switched to a ground voltage level and the non-selected column sector address signal **SnCOM** of the column sector is switched to a Vdd voltage level. As a result, as a second transistor **T2** of the local row decoder is turned on by the non-selected global word line signal **GWL**, a voltage of the node **B** maintains a Vdd voltage level, and the voltage of the node **B** turns on a fifth transistor **T5**, thus the sector word line signal **SnWL** maintains a ground voltage level.

On the other hand, the selected global word line signal **GWL** becomes a Vdd voltage level so that the first transistor **T1** is turned on, thus a voltage of the node **B** becomes a voltage of the column sector address signal **SnCOM** by means of the column sector. Therefore, since the column sector address signal **SnCOM** of the non-selected column sectors is at Vdd voltage level, the fifth transistor **T5** is turned on. Thus, the sector word line signal **SnWL** becomes a ground voltage level. Since the only column sector address signal **SnCOM** of the selected column sectors becomes a ground voltage level, the fourth transistor **T4** is turned on and the sector word line signal **SnWL** has a Vdd voltage level. As a result, only one selected sector word line signal **SnWL** of all the sector word lines **SnWL** has a Vdd voltage level, and the other sector word line signals **SnWL** maintain a ground voltage level.

Next, in a program mode, the first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** of a

selected sector is switched to a Vpp voltage level, the first voltage supply signal SnVppx of non-selected sectors is switched to a Vdd voltage level, and all second voltage supply signals **SnVeex** are switched to a ground voltage level. Also, the column sector address signal **SnCOM** of the selected column sector is switched to a ground voltage level and the non-selected column sector address signal **SnCOM** is switched to a Vdd voltage level. Therefore, the non-selected global word line signal **GWL** turns on the second transistor **T2** so at to a switching a voltage of the node **B** to a Vdd voltage level and the Vdd voltage level applied to the node **B** turns on the fifth transistor **T5**. Therefore, a corresponding sector word line signal **SnWL** maintains a ground voltage level.

Meanwhile, the selected global word line signal **GWL** turns on the first transistor **T1**, therefore, the node **B** maintains a voltage of a column sector address signal **SnCOM** by means of a column sector. At this time, the third and the fifth transistors **T3** and **T5** in the non-selected column sector are turned on, therefore, the sector word line signal **SnWL** maintains a ground voltage level. And, the fourth transistor **T4** in the selected column sector is turned on, therefore, the sector word line signal **SnWL** maintains a Vpp voltage level.

As a result, only one selected sector word line signal **SnWL** of all the sector word lines signal **SnWL** has a Vpp voltage level, and the other sector word line signals **SnWL** maintains a ground voltage level.

In an erasure mode, the first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** of a selected

sector is switched to a ground voltage level and the second voltage supply signal SnVeex is switched to a -Vpp voltage level. And, the first voltage supply signals **SnVppx** of non-selected sectors are switched to a Vdd voltage level and the second voltage supply signals **SnVeex** of the non-selected sectors are switched to a ground voltage level. Since a voltage of the global word line signal **GWL** which is an output signal of the global low decoder is at Vdd voltage level, the first transistor **T1** is turned on by means of the global word line signal **GWL**, thus the node **B** maintains a voltage of a column sector address signal **SnCOM** by means of the column sector. At this time, as the first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** and the column sector address signal **SnCOM** of the non-selected sectors maintain Vdd voltage level, the node **B** maintains a Vdd voltage level and the fifth transistor T5 is turned on. As a result, the sector word line signal **SnWL** of the non-selected sectors maintain a ground voltage level.

On the other hand, since the first voltage supply signal **SnVppx** of a selected sector maintains a ground voltage level, the second voltage supply signal **SnVeex** is at -Vpp voltage level and the column sector address signal **SnCOM** maintain a ground voltage level, the fifth transistor T5 of all the local row decoders of the selected sector is turned on and all the sector word line signals **SnWL** of the selected sector maintain a -Vpp voltage level.

FIG. 4 is a circuit diagram illustrating a global row decoder according to

the second embodiment of the present invention. **XnCOM** of a global row decoder selected by a row address signal maintains a Vdd voltage level.

Explanation for the operations will be given mode-by-mode as follow.

In a read mode, **Vppx** *i*s switched to a Vdd voltage level and **Veex** is switched to a ground voltage level. At this time, as **XnCOM** of a selected global row decoder is at Vdd voltage level, a second transistor **T12** is turned off and a first transistor **T11** is turned on. Therefore, the node **B** maintains a ground voltage level so that the fourth transistor **T14** is turned on and the global word line signal **GWL** maintains a Vdd voltage level.

Meanwhile, as **XnCOM** of a non-selected global row decoder maintains a ground voltage level, the second transistor **T12** is turned on, thus the node **B** maintains a Vdd voltage level. Therefore, a third transistor **T13** is turned on so that non-selected global word line signal **GWL** maintains a ground voltage level.

In a program mode, **Vppx** of the global row decoder is switched to a Vpp voltage level by means of a selected row sector address, and **Vppx** of non-selected global row decoders is switched to a Vdd voltage level. At this time, the first transistor **T11** of the selected global row decoder is turned on so that the node **B** maintains a ground voltage level. As a result, the fourth transistor **T14** is turned on and thus the selected global word line signal **GWL** maintain a Vpp voltage level.

Meanwhile, as **XnCOM** of the non-selected global row decoder maintains

a ground voltage level, the second transistor **T12** is turned on so that the node **B** maintains a Vpp voltage level, Also, the third transistor **T13** is turned on so that the non-selected global word line signal **GWL** maintains a ground voltage level.

Finally, in an erasure mode, **Vppx** of the global row decoder selected by a row sector address is switched to a ground voltage level and **Vppx** of the non-selected global row decoders is switched to a Vdd voltage level. And, **Veex** of the selected global row decoder is switched to a −Vpp voltage level and **Vppx** of the non-selected global row decoders is switched to a ground voltage level. Also, as **XnCOM** of the global row decoder maintains a Vdd voltage level by an erase signal in the erasure mode and Veex of the row sector selected by the row sector address is at −Vpp voltage level, the first and the third transistors T11 and T13 in the global row decoder of the selected row sector are turned on and thus the all global word line signal GWL maintain a −Vpp voltage level.

Meanwhile, Veex of the non-selected global row decoder maintains a ground voltage level and Vppx thereof maintains a Vdd voltage level so that the second and the third transistors **T12** and **T13** are turned on, thus the global word line signal GWL maintains a ground voltage level.

FIG. 5 is a circuit diagram of a local row decoder. In the local decoder to which the global word line signal **GWL** is input, the voltage level of the

global word line signal **GWL** is transferred to the only column sector selected by a combination of the first and the second column sector address signals **SnCOM** and **SnCOMB**, and the word line signal **GWL** of the non-selected column sectors maintains a ground voltage level.

Vppx and Veex of the local row decoder and **Vppx** and **Veex** of the global row decoder are switched according to the each mode. And, although the fifth transistor **T15** and the sixth transistor **T16** in the local row decoder of a column sector selected by a combination of a gate input of the local row decoder (the first and the second column sector address signals **SnCOM** and **SnCOMB**), **Vppx** and **Veex** are turned on, the fifth transistor **T15** and the sixth transistor **T16** in the local row decoder of non-selected column sector are turned off and the seventh transistor **T17** is turned on so that the word line signal **SnWL** maintains a ground voltage level.

Explanation of the operation will be described mode-by-mode.

In a read mode, **Vppx** maintains a Vdd voltage level and **Veex** maintains a ground voltage level. A selected global word line **GWL** maintains a Vdd voltage level and a non-selected global word line signal **GWL** maintains a ground voltage level. At this time, as a first column sector address **SnCOM** is switched to a ground voltage level and a second column sector address **SnCOMB** is switched to a Vdd voltage level, the fifth and the sixth transistors **T15** and **T16** of a selected column sector are turned on, and the seventh

transistor **T17** is turned off, so that the word line signal **SnWL** maintains a Vdd voltage level of the global word line signal **GWL**.

Meanwhile, as the first column sector address signal **SnCOM** is switched to a Vdd voltage level and the second column sector address signal **SnCOMB** is switched to a Vdd voltage level, the fifth and the sixth transistor **T15** and **T16** of a non-selected column are turned off and the seventh transistor **T17** is turned on so that the word line signals **SnWL** maintain a ground voltage level.

In a program mode, a selected global word line signal **GWL** maintains a Vpp voltage level and **Vppx** maintains a Vpp voltage level. And, a selected global word line signal **GWL** maintains a ground voltage level, **Vppx** maintains a Vdd voltage level, and **Veex** maintain a ground voltage level. As the first column sector address signal **SnCOM** maintains a Vdd voltage level and the second column sector address signal **SnCOMB** maintains a ground voltage level, the fifth and the sixth transistor **T15** and **T16** of the local row decoder in non-selected row sector are turned off and the seventh transistor **T17** is turned on so that the word line signal **SnWL** maintains a ground voltage level.

On the other hand, if the first column sector address signal **SnCOM** maintains a ground voltage level and the second column sector address signal **SnCOMB** maintains a Vdd voltage level, the fifth and the sixth transistor **T15** and **T16** of the local row decoder are turned on and the seventh transistor **T17** is turned off so that the global word line signal **GWL** maintains a voltage level

of the global the word line signal **SnWL.** As a result, only single word line signal **SnWL** maintains a Vpp voltage level and the other the word line signals **SnWL** maintain a ground voltage level.

In an erase mode, the global word line signal **GWL** selected by a row sector address maintains a -Vpp voltage level, **Vppx** maintains a ground voltage level and **Veex** maintains a -Vpp voltage level. And, a non-selected global word line signal **GWL** maintains a Vdd voltage level, Vppx maintains a Vdd voltage level, and **Veex** maintains a ground voltage level. Since the first column sector address signal **SnCOM** of the non-selected row sector maintains a Vdd voltage level and the second column sector address signal **SnCOMB** maintains a ground voltage level, the fifth and the sixth transistor **T15** and **T16** are turned off and the seventh transistor **T17** is turned on so that the word line signal **SnWL** of all the local row decoders maintain a ground voltage level.

The first column sector address signal **SnCOM** of a selected column sectors among the selected row sectors maintains a -Vpp voltage level and the second column sector address signal **SnCOMB** maintains a ground voltage level. And, the first column sector address signal SnCOM of the non-selected column sectors maintains a ground voltage level and the second column sector address signal SnCOMB maintains a -Vpp voltage level.

As a result, even though the global word line signal **GWL** maintains a -Vpp voltage level by means of the row sector address, the fifth and the sixth

transistors **T15** and T16 of the local row decoders of the selected column sector are turned on and the seventh transistor **T17** is turned off so that the word line signal SnWL maintains a voltage level of the global word line **GWL**. Also, the fifth and the sixth transistors **T15** and **T16** of the local row decoders of the non-selected column sector are turned off and the seventh transistor **T17** is turned on so that the word line signal **SnWL** of the local row decoders of the non-selected column sector maintains a ground voltage level.

In the present invention as described above, a load due to a row address signal can be minimized by increasing a local row decoder to which an output of a global row decoder is input as many as a number of sector when the sector is divided in column direction, therefore, it is possible to decrease an access time and decrease a size of chip due to the local row decoder having a simply circuit. Also, it is possible to decrease a load to pumping voltage (Vpp and -Vpp)

The foregoing description, although described in its preferred embodiments with a certain degree of particularity, is only illustrative of the principle of the present invention. It is to be understood that the present invention is not to be limited to the preferred embodiments disclosed and illustrated herein. Accordingly, all expedient variations that may be made within the scope and spirit of the present invention are to be encompassed as further embodiments of the present invention.